



HOW TO... Organise photos

It can be hard to keep track of all your digital photos, but Photoshop Album 2.0 can help you to organise them, as Scott Colvey explains

Sales of digital cameras now outstrip those of traditional film-based models, as more and more people wake up to the advantages of snapping photos electronically. Why risk wasted exposures when dodgy snaps captured to memory card can be easily erased? It's also great to be able to transfer digital photos to a PC for long-term storage, manipulation and printing.

However, such collections quickly expand and, if you're not careful, they can become unmanageable. Read on and you'll learn how to stay on top of your growing digital photo stack using Adobe Photoshop Album 2.0 Starter Edition, a great free application that you can download from www.adobe.com/products/photoshopalbum/starter.html.

1 The first time you launch the application, Photoshop Album 2.0 displays a Quick Guide screen. This offers a useful overview of the program's many and varied functions, but its repeated appearance is unnecessary so, once you've explored it, click to remove the tick from the Show this window at startup checkbox.

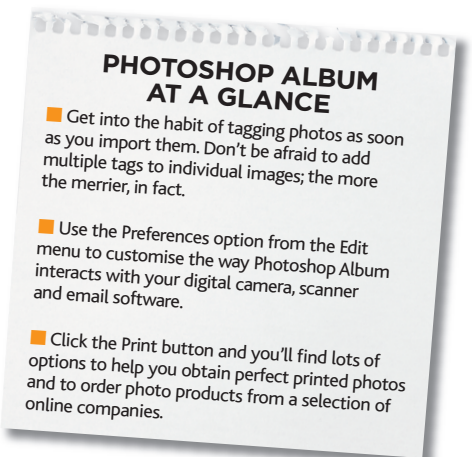
You'll now see the main Photoshop Album application window, which, for obvious reasons, is initially bereft of images. To rectify this, click the Get Photos button at the top of the window and choose your preferred method of image acquisition. For example, pick From Scanner if you're intending to scan traditional prints, or From Files and Folders if you have existing digital images already stored on your hard disk. The program will also import many popular video and audio file formats it finds.

2 With some photos and multimedia files duly imported, you can start organising them. To this end, Photoshop Album employs tags that you attach to individual images for categorisation. For example, you might want to tag all photographs featuring images of relatives as 'Family', while all other pictures of people posing could be tagged 'People'.

To attach a tag, right-click on any image thumbnail in the Photoshop Album application window and select Attach Tag from the pop-up menu. Now work through the sub-categories until you find a suitable tag. If no tags seem appropriate, you can create a new one by selecting the New Tag option from the Tag menu.

3 When you begin manipulating tags, you'll notice that a new pane appears on the right-hand side of the main application window. Essentially, this is a list of all tags and sub-categories that exist. Each entry in this list has a checkbox beside it and if you click to place a tick in the box it modifies the view in the main window. For example, if you tick, say, the Family tag, only photos that have been previously flagged as Family will be displayed. Ticking multiple checkboxes further refines the thumbnails displayed.

4 Double-clicking on any thumbnail image in the main pane presents a larger view. In the case of video or audio, it places the content in a window with multimedia controls. In this larger view, you can add captions to photos by typing the text directly into the Caption entry area. Later, you can benefit from this small effort by



searching your collection by caption content rather than, or in addition to, tags. Just select the By Caption or Note option from the Find menu.

5 Photoshop Album has some rudimentary photo-editing and enhancement tools. To use them, first click to highlight a thumbnail in the main application window and then hit the Fix button so the Fix Photo dialog box appears. Use the header tabs at the top of this dialog to flit between Original, After and Before & After views of the selected photo. In the After tab, you'll find buttons for automatic colour and contrast corrections, along with image-sharpening, cropping and red-eye removal.

Photoshop Album does not make changes to the original image file; instead, it creates a new file, adding a suffix of _edited to the filename.

6 When you've had enough of Photoshop Album's organisational abilities, take a look at the Create and Share options, both of which are accessed by clicking buttons in the main viewing window. Click on Create and Photoshop Album will generate a PDF slideshow comprising all currently selected images. Alternatively, click the Share button, select the Email option and a wizard will take you through the process of generating a slideshow specifically optimised for sending by email. ☐

